

# Air Pollution in Utah Fact Sheet

## Air Pollution in Utah

- Air pollution is generally concentrated along the Wasatch Front and Cache Valley
- Particulate air pollution is usually higher in the winter months and increases during weather inversions
- Ozone (produced from pollutants reacting chemically in the presence of sunlight) is usually higher in summer months
- Rural areas generally have fewer air pollution concerns, therefore the guidance may not apply
- High air pollution days are associated with:
  - Increased emergency room visits for asthma
  - Increased incidence of symptoms and medication use for asthma
  - Increased number of asthma attacks on days following higher ozone levels
  - Increased school absenteeism among those with respiratory diseases following a high Air Quality Index (AQI) value day
- Unhealthy AQI days in the Greater Salt Lake Area:
  - In the last two years (2002-03), there were 43 days with an AQI level between 101-150.
  - In the last two years (2002-03), there were 4 days with an AQI level greater than 151.
- Unhealthy AQI days in Cache Valley:
  - In 2004 alone (Jan-Mar), there have been 15 days with an AQI level between 101-150 and 17 days with an AQI level greater than 151.

## Asthma in Utah, Ages 0-17

- Most common chronic illness among children
- Leading cause of missed school days within the United States, accounting for more than 10 million missed school days a year
- Prevalence (2001)
  - Males - 5.6%
  - Females - 3.4%
- Emergency Room Visits (2002)
  - 2,901 per year
  - Average Cost: \$930/person
- Hospitalizations (2002)
  - 691 per year
  - Average cost: \$3,778/person

Source: Health Status Survey, 2001; Emergency Department Database, 2002; Hospital Discharge Database, 2002

## Major Contributors

Utah Department of Environmental Quality  
Utah Department of Health  
Utah State Office of Education  
American Lung Association of Utah  
Cache County School District

Bear River Health Department  
Salt Lake Valley Health Department  
Intermountain Pediatric Society  
Utah School Nurses Association  
Utah Medical Association

Need more information?

Utah Department of Health/Asthma Program  
[health.utah.gov/asthma](http://health.utah.gov/asthma)  
Utah Department of Environmental Quality/Division of Air Quality  
[cleanair.utah.gov](http://cleanair.utah.gov)  
Utah State Office of Education  
[www.usoe.k12.ut.us](http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us)